

A  
FAMILIAR TREATISE  
ON THE  
SACRAMENT.  
WITH AN  
APPENDIX,  
ON THE  
EXPEDIENCY OF A CORRECTION  
OF OUR PRESENT  
TRANSLATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

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BY  
GEORGE HAGGITT, M. A.  
RECTOR OF BEACHAMWELL, NORFOLK.

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AND W. H. LUNN, CAMBRIDGE.

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(Price One Shilling and Sixpence.)

FAMILIAR TREATISE

SACRAMENT

A PRIMER

EXTENDING TO THE

OF THE

TRANSFORMATION



OF THE

OF THE

BY J. RACKHAM

PRINTED AND SOLD BY J. RACKHAM, STATIONER

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## P R E F A C E.

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**I**T will be obvious to all persons of education, that the following pages aim neither at novelty nor elegance. The writer of them has endeavoured to convey his sentiments in the plainest manner of which the subject is susceptible, and our language will admit. He flatters himself, that there is no class of people to which they will not be intelligible. If it should be asked, why, when so many tracts of the same nature already exist, he should think it necessary to add to them; he replies,—first, that it is but too apparent that, however much may have been done, by the labours of his predecessors, much remains still undone, since there are multitudes of persons, every where to be met with, even far advanced in years, who, in their moral conduct, are by no means flagitious, and who would be shocked at the imputation of impety, who have hitherto lived, and are still continuing to live in the total neglect of a plain and express command of their  
their



their Master and Saviour, and this without any visible dissatisfaction with themselves on account of their disobedience, or any apprehensions of the consequence: he replies secondly, that new books will sometimes be read, merely because they are new; while, for the opposite reason, old books, however superior in merit, are neglected: he replies, lastly (and on this answer he chiefly rests), that he has never yet seen a tract on the Lord's supper, which comes up to his idea of plainness. To write so as to be thoroughly understood by the common people, may perhaps require a mediocrity of talents, above or below which the generality of those, who give themselves to the public, possess. It is probable that many of them set out as he has done, with a full purpose to make themselves intelligible to the lowest capacities, but, he thinks, that, in the ardour of composition, their ideas have run away with them, and that they, in consequence, have failed. Whether the same may not be objected to himself, must be left to his readers to determine.

With respect to the Appendix, the writer is aware that, besides those who may disapprove of it altogether, there are others who may think it improperly joined to a Treatise designed for the people at large. He cannot but

but differ with them, for reasons which he has given in the Appendix itself: however, as the Treatise is of infinitely the most consequence, if there are any who shall so far approve it, as to wish to distribute it among their indigent neighbours, and shall be desirous of having it without the Appendix, he has directed his bookseller to print a certain number of copies of the Treatise separately, which, by those who buy for the above benevolent purpose, may be had at an easier rate.

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the suffer with them, for reasons which he  
has given in the Appendix itself. Moreover, as  
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A  
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## S E C T. I.

*Of the First Appointment of the Sacrament.*

**T**HE first question which a person entirely uninformed about the matter would put to me, when I called on him to receive the Sacrament, would be this, Who appointed it? To which the Scriptures supply a ready answer, It was Jesus Christ. He would then (supposing him still uninformed) immediately inquire, Who is Jesus Christ, and why am I under an obligation to comply with his appointment? To this I should return, Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of the most high God, who about eighteen hundred years ago, when mankind, from the transgression of their first parent, and from their own ini-

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quities,

quities, were in a fallen condition, objects of God's displeasure, and entirely ignorant what they were to do to avoid it, came down from heaven to live amongst us, like us in every thing, sin alone excepted. The grand purposes of his coming were two; first, to teach us, both by precept and example, how we ought to serve God, and behave towards each other; secondly, *to shed his blood for the remission of sins* \*, and to become *the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him* †. The condition, you must observe, of our obtaining through him this eternal salvation is, obedience to his laws; if this be wanting, as far as concerns us, he will have suffered in vain. The whole life of Jesus was spent in doing good; he was ever engaged either in instructing the minds, or healing the bodies of men. This latter he used to perform in a miraculous manner, making the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk; sometimes with a touch, sometimes with a word, sometimes without even seeing the object whom he relieved. We have likewise three instances recorded, of his raising the dead. His life and conversation were particularly disagreeable, on various accounts, to the persons in power in the country in which he

\* Matt. xxvi. 28.

† Heb. v. 9.

lived;

lived; they all along hated him, and accordingly laid many plans to insnare and destroy him. These were for some time defeated, partly by his irreproachable manners, and partly by the favour in which he stood with the people in general; but at last, when the time was arrived originally intended for his death, he voluntarily suffered his enemies to prevail; he allowed the plot of one of his followers against him to take effect; he submitted to every kind of indignity and insult; and lastly, he graciously condescended to undergo a most painful and shameful death on the cross. It was on the very night on which he was delivered up to his adversaries, and a very short time before his submitting to these sufferings and this death, that he appointed to be perpetually observed, the ceremony which we are now considering. His first institution or appointment of it, is told nearly in the same words, by \* three of the

\* St. John, the other person who has left us an account of our Saviour's life, has made no mention of the appointment of the Lord's supper: this however is no argument against its importance, since it is generally agreed, that he wrote to *supply* what the other three had omitted; and we accordingly find, that he touches but slightly, and even totally omits many other very material circumstances which they have related.



four persons who have left us accounts of his life, St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke : I will put down what they have said concerning it in separate columns, that the reader may have the whole before him at once.

St. MATT. ch. xxvi.

26 And, as they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body.

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it :

28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

St. MARK, ch. xiv.

22 And, as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat ; this is my body.

23 And he took the cup ; and, when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them ; and they all drank of it.

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

St. LUKE, ch. xxii.

19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body, which is given for you : this do in remembrance of me.

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

To these I shall subjoin what St. Paul says on the same subject, 1 Cor. xi. 23. “ For  
 “ I have received of the Lord, that which  
 “ also I delivered unto you, that the Lord  
 “ Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread :—24 And when he had  
 “ given thanks, he brake *it*, and said, Take,  
 “ eat, this is my body which is broken for  
 “ you : this do in remembrance of me.—25  
 “ After the same manner also *he took* the cup,  
 “ when he had supped, saying, This cup is  
 “ the new testament in my blood : this do,  
 “ as

“ as oft as ye drink it in remembrance of me.

“ —26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and

“ drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s

“ death till he come\*.”

From the whole of these accounts we gather, that Jesus Christ, the very night on which he was delivered up to his enemies, supped with his twelve usual companions; that, after the meal was ended, he took a loaf, and having given thanks to God over it, he broke it to pieces, and gave it amongst them, using words to this effect, “ Take and eat  
“ this bread, which is a sign, token, representation, or memorial† of my body, which  
“ is going to be pierced or broken for you.” And that after this, he took a cup of wine, and having given thanks over that also, he delivered it to them, saying, “ Drink ye all  
“ of this, for this is a sign, token, representation, or memorial of my blood, through  
“ the shedding of which, God has entered  
“ into a new covenant with man, by which,

\* It is not of importance, whether we consider the words contained in this last verse, as spoken by our Saviour, or by St. Paul.

† This was clearly his meaning, and he took for granted that they would understand it. They could not, they did not suppose that the bread was in reality his body, but merely that it represented it, that it stood for it.

“ on

“ on certain conditions, man obtains forgiveness of his sins: this ceremony you, and all my followers to the end of the world, are to perform in remembrance of me; for as often as ye do it, ye do shew forth, as it were act over, the circumstances of my death.” This I take to have been Christ’s real and full meaning.

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S E C T. II.

*On the different Names by which the above Ceremony is called.*

**FIRST**, it is called the **LORD’S SUPPER**. The reason of this is sufficiently clear: it was at the last supper, of which our Lord partook with his disciples, that he laid his commands on them to perform this action in remembrance of him.

Secondly, it is called **THE SACRAMENT**. Our church acknowledges another sacrament, the sacrament of baptism; but wherever **THE SACRAMENT** is mentioned, without any addition, the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is intended. The reason of this name having been given to it seems to be this; the oath taken by soldiers to be faithful to their leader, was called by the Latins, *Sacramentum* (in English



English a Sacrament): now, by partaking of the Lord's Supper, we clearly acknowledge Christ to be our master, and do, as it were, enter into a solemn engagement to be faithful and obedient to him.

Thirdly, it is called **THE COMMUNION**. The meaning of the word communion is, a partaking of something in common, or together. As we Christians partake of the Lord's Supper in common, or together, without distinction of ranks, and without any difference either of acquaintances or strangers, it comes thence to be named **The Communion**.

Fourthly, it is called **THE EUCHARIST**. This word signifies the act of giving thanks. Now we partake of the Lord's Supper in grateful remembrance of his death; it is our most solemn manner of offering our gratitude to him; and on that account it has obtained the name of **The Eucharist**.

I will endeavour to explain here, as I may not have a more proper opportunity of doing it, how the term mystery, or mysteries, came to be applied to the Lord's Supper. Among some of those nations to whom Christianity was first published, there were particular ceremonies in their religions, which were communicated only to select persons, and from  
taking

taking any part in which the unlearned and the vulgar were excluded. The first instruction in these ceremonies was called the Initiation, and the ceremonies themselves were termed Mysteries. The word Mystery means neither more nor less than something hidden or secret. Now, in the article of concealment, there was a near resemblance between the above-mentioned ceremonies in the Pagan Religions, and The Lord's Supper; for not only all infidels were carefully excluded from this latter, but many believers also; those, for instance, who, though professing themselves Christian's, had not yet been baptized; and those who, having committed any gross sin, had not yet received the absolution of the church. The persecutions, likewise, to which they were subject from the Jews and Heathens, made the early Christians studious of secrecy in their celebration of this rite. Now it seems to have been owing to this, that the name of a mystery was originally given to the Lord's Supper; and though, probably, it was at first bestowed invidiously by the adversaries of the Christians, in process of time it came to be adopted by themselves.

## S E C T. III.

*Expostulatory Arguments with those who neglect to partake of the Sacrament, from Inattention or Idleness.*

**D**O you believe that there ever was such a person as Jesus Christ, and that he was sent into the world to instruct and to save mankind? If you do *not*, why do you call yourself a Christian; why were you baptized, or, at least, why did you take upon yourself, at your confirmation, the vows made for you by your godfathers and godmothers at your baptism; why do you come to church; why do you join with those who call Christ their master, in any one act of religion? But if you *do* believe that there was such a person as Jesus Christ, and that he was sent into the world to instruct and to save mankind, I have another question to ask you, Are you convinced that the book called the New Testament faithfully informs you of what he has commanded you to believe, and to practise? If you are, you must remember, that this sacrament is one of the things which he most solemnly, and, as it were, with his dying breath, ordered all his followers to celebrate till the end of the world. If then

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you



you neglect it, on what pretence do you presume to call yourself a Christian? Look into the Gospels, and there you will see the first appointment of the Sacrament described, by three of those four persons who wrote accounts of our Saviour's life: one of them, St. Matthew, was present at the time; and the other two were informed of it by some of those who were likewise present: St. Matthew could not be deceived, as he saw with his own eyes, and heard with his own ears; and St. Mark and St. Luke were not likely to be deceived; nor could any of the three have any motive to impose upon others. You see, they have told us that it was Christ's positive command, that we should partake of this Sacrament in remembrance of his sufferings for our sake. How can you then neglect to obey him! It is usual for men to comply with the requests which even a common friend makes to them on his death-bed, if they are not very unreasonable indeed; how can you then deny this most easy one to the greatest friend that ever was in the world; to one who spent his whole life in your service, and endured for your sake the most painful and shameful death; a request which he made just at the instant when he was going to give this last wonderful proof of his affection

fection for you. But Christ was more than your friend, he was your master likewise, and had an undoubted right to lay this or any other command upon you ; so that if you will be so ungrateful as not to comply with it as a request, consider and obey it as a command. Remember, that in neglecting it, you will be guilty of rebellion, and exposed to the punishment due to that crime. Reflect also, that, besides being your friend and your master, Christ is to be your judge ; and tremble at the thoughts of finding him prejudiced against you. If you were to be tried for your life, and knew who was to try you, would you not, if you believed it possible, endeavour to make him friendly to you ? How much more then should you seek to make an interest in the favour of Christ, before whose judgment seat you are to stand, when you are to be tried for your soul !

Some of you, perhaps, will plead, that you do not see how so simple an action as eating bread and drinking wine, in the manner prescribed, should be of any service to you ; but let me counsel you to leave the event of it to God : that the action is commanded by him, ought to be sufficient to secure your obedience ; objections drawn from our own ignorance, are, of all, the most unreasonable.

Naaman, the Syrian, did not see how dipping seven times in the river Jordan, as he had been ordered by the Prophet, could cure him of his leprosy; and he, at first, with much contempt and indignation, refused to comply; but he was at last persuaded, and experienced the salutary effects. If therefore you have hitherto imitated Naaman in his incredulity, imitate him henceforth in his faith.

Christ appointed himself the two sacraments, Baptism, and that which goes by his name, the Lord's Supper; none, who call themselves Christians, neglect the first; why then do they neglect the latter? Suppose that all were to do, as you do, to refuse complying with this positive command of Christ, the consequence must be, that the Sacrament would be entirely laid aside; and what marks of God's indignation might follow,—it is dreadful but to think! Ten righteous persons might formerly have saved a whole city, but they were not found: you remember the consequence; the city was miserably destroyed. The number of those, who do *not* receive the Sacrament, is, I fear, greater than that of those who do; but yet, thank Heaven! there are multitudes, who both know and perform their duty in this respect; I would have the negligent consider, whether they do not owe  
their



their preservation to the obedient ; for it is scarcely to be imagined, that God would permit even the existence of a nation, who called themselves Christians, and who knew what they ought to do, and who yet universally omitted this most solemn act of their religion.

There are some, I believe, of those to whom this treatise is particularly addressed, who, though they confess that they find in their Testament this Sacrament strictly enjoined, yet try to persuade themselves that the injunction does not extend to all men. But why do any of you think so? Do you find any exception? Why no,—you cannot say that you do ; but yet you plead, that so solemn a ceremony cannot have been meant for the labouring part of the world, because their employments take up so much of their time, that they cannot prepare themselves properly. But what! do you imagine that the Christian religion was only intended for the use of the rich? You forget, surely, that Jesus Christ, when he was on earth, chiefly kept company with the poor, and addressed himself to them; and that he declared frequently, that the religion which he preached more particularly belonged to them. Now the most solemn part of this religion is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ; did Christ then mean to ex-  
clude

clude the poor from partaking of it? Certainly not!—We have great reason to believe, that the early Christians received the Sacrament every time they met together, on the Lord's day, at public worship; most of them were of the poorer sort, and of course were obliged to get their livelihood by the labour of their hands; yet *they* found time to prepare themselves properly for the Sacrament; why therefore cannot the poor of these days do the same?—Religion and worldly business may very well exist together. God forbid that it should not be so! for are not by far the larger part of mankind forced to maintain themselves by worldly business, of some kind or other? What a number therefore would be doomed to endless misery, in the next world, if they could not take care of their souls, at the same time that they are providing for their present subsistence! Think not then that the Sacrament, or any other part of religion, was intended only for those, who have nothing else to do: it was intended for all; and he who for a short time offers his devotions to God, morning and evening, and is habitually grateful and pious towards him, honest and benevolent in his intercourse with his brethren, temperate and sober in his own conduct, and diligent at his particular calling,  
may

may fit himself to perform any religious duty, as well as a man of the greatest learning, and the greatest leisure.

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#### S E C T. IV.

*Confutation of those Fears and Scruples by which many are prevented from attending the Sacrament.*

**B**EFORE I enter on this part of the subject, I shall put down that passage in St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians, which, from its being misunderstood, has been the cause of those fears and scruples, that I shall now endeavour to remove. I shall put down the whole passage, including all that goes before and follows it, which is any ways connected with it; for it is so only that we can come at the true sense of the Scriptures, or indeed of any other book. By selecting particular parts, without an attention to the context, a book may be made to say the very reverse of what it does in reality. The words which are inclosed between brackets, are Dr. Whitby's; the reader will find, that they throw light on the passages to which they are joined. 1 Cor. xi. 17. Now in this (*other thing*) that I  
(*am*



*(am about to)* declare unto you, I praise you not (*viz.*) that you come together *(so as is)*, not for the better but for the worse.

18 For first of all, when you come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it *(or I believe it true of some part of you)*.

19 For *(according to our Lord's saying, Matth. xviii. 7.)* there must be also heresies *(or sects)* among you, that they who are approved *(of God)* may be made manifest among you.

20 When you come together therefore *(thus)* to one place, this is not *(acting as if you came)* to eat the Lord's Supper *(the feast of Christian charity and communion)*.

21 For in *(your way of)* eating, every one taketh before *(the)* other his own supper *(not tarrying for or regarding others)*, and *(so it falls out, that)* one *(who had nothing to bring)* is *(still)* hungry, and another *(with his plenty)* is drunken.

22 What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in, or despise ye *(those poor Christians who are members of)* the Church of God *(as well as you ;)* and *(put to)* shame them that have not *(what to eat or drink ?)* What shall I say to you ? Shall I praise you in doing this ? I praise you not.

23 *(To*

23 (*To come together thus, I say, is not to come as they ought to do, who assemble to eat the Lord's Supper ;*) for I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread ;

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said (*to them all*), Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of me (*giving my body to be broken for you all*).

25 After the same manner he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup (*that is, the wine contained in it*) is the (*memorial of the*) New Testament (*or covenant ratified*) in my blood ; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me, (*confirming this covenant with my blood*).

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew (*by this memorial of it*) the Lord's death till he come (*to judgment*.)

27 Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily (*as they must do who by this practice thwart the great design of this institution, which was to shew his equal love to all, to whom he equally gave these elements, and to oblige us to live in a continual remembrance of it*), shall be

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guilty

guilty of (*violating the Sacrament of*) the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily (*as they who make these divisions and distinctions, and commit these disorders, when they come together to eat the Lord's Supper, do,*) eateth and drinketh damnation (*judgment*) to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

30 For this cause (*the not discerning the Lord's body*), many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

31 For if we would (*thus*) judge (*and discern*) ourselves, we should not be judged (*or thus punished by God.*)

32 But when (*neglecting this*) we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world, (*but awakened by those chastisements to reform those evil practices, which render us obnoxious to condemnation.*)

33 Wherefore, my Brethren, (*that this miscarriage may be rectified*) when ye come together to eat (*the Lord's Supper*), tarry one for another.

34 And if any man hunger, let him eat at home, that you come not together to condemnation.

The



The Corinthians were a people of Greece, many of whom had been converted to Christianity. It was a custom with these to meet together frequently to sup; the supper was furnished by the wealthier part of the assembly, who each of them brought with him something towards it; and then, the whole being thrown into a common stock, rich and poor partook of it together. This, I say, was the original design and practice; and these meetings were called Love-feasts. They were copied from meetings to which the Corinthians had been used, before their conversion; where the supper was furnished, in a similar manner, by the contribution of the different guests; though, probably, among the unconverted, the various ranks did not meet so indiscriminately, as among the Christians. Now it appears to me, that the Corinthian Christians imagined, that the Lord's Supper was of the same nature as their club-suppers, or love-feasts \*, though they behaved at it in a manner which would have been

\* It may, perhaps, admit of a doubt, whether the love-feasts were of so early a date as this epistle of St. Paul's to the Corinthians; if they were *not*, their fault seems to have been, making no distinction between the Lord's Supper, and those club-suppers to which they had been accustomed in their Heathen state.

very improper even at them; for they not only began without waiting for each other, but they who were richer, and able to bring with them a greater quantity of provisions, eat and drank to excess, while the poorer part of the company were unable to get sufficient to satisfy the calls of hunger. This improper and indecent manner of performing so sacred a ceremony, the Apostle tells them, is very criminal\*: in the 20th verse he describes

\* There have been some, who have imagined, that St. Paul means to reprove the Corinthians, for thinking that the Sacrament was of the same nature with the Pascal feast, at which it was the custom for the Jews to drink freely: there have been others who have imagined, that the abuses of which he complains, were not committed at the Sacrament, but at the Love-feast, which, they say, immediately preceded it. I cannot but think that they are both mistaken. As to the first opinion, it is hardly credible (as Whitby observes) that the Corinthians should mistake the Lord's Supper, of which they partook every week, for the Pascal-feast, which was celebrated only once a year. As to the second opinion, that seems to be confuted by this part of St. Paul's reproof, "What, have ye not houses to eat and to drink in!" This, surely, he would not have said, if he had been speaking concerning the Love-feasts: at those, I presume, there could be nothing wrong in their making a regular meal; it was meant that they should do so. Abuses which obtained at the Sacrament itself, were, I think, alone in  
the

scribes what their fault is; " In eating, every  
 " one taketh before another his own supper,  
 " and one is hungry, and another is drunken.  
 " What (he goes on to say in the 21st verse),  
 " have ye not houses to eat and to drink in, or  
 " despise ye the church of God, and shame  
 " them which have not?" That is, if you  
 want to eat and drink, to satisfy the calls of  
 hunger, why do not you do it at home?  
 Why do you treat with contempt your fellow  
 Christians, and insult them by the shew of  
 an abundance which you do not permit them  
 to share? The words, " Church of God,"  
 mean here, not the place, but the people  
 who were assembled together to serve God;  
 and the words, " them which have not,"  
 mean the persons who have not provisions  
 with them. St. Paul, having told them their  
 fault, proceeds to lay before them the first  
 appointment or institution of the Sacrament,  
 that they may see, that it was of a different  
 nature from a common meal. This he does

the Apostle's mind; the Corinthians behaved at it just as  
 they did at a common meal, just as they did at their  
 Love-feasts, but, indeed, as it would have been highly  
 scandalous to have done even at them. Their intempe-  
 perance and disregard to their poor brethren would have  
 been extremely blameable on any occasion; how much  
 more then, when the ceremony was of so sacred a nature!

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in the 23d, 24th, and 25th verses, which I need not repeat: and in the 26th he tells them the reason and end of the institution; “ As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come; ” that is, ye do perform a solemn and important action, representing your Redeemer’s death, in its most affecting circumstances; which Christians of all ages must continue to do, till Christ’s second coming to close the present scene. “ Wherefore ” (he proceeds) that is, since the intent of the appointment of this ceremony, is of so sacred a nature, “ whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord; ” the meaning of which is, whosoever shall perform this action in an irreverend manner, without a due regard to the design of it; whosoever shall make no difference between the Sacrament and a common meal, will be guilty of treating the death of Christ with disrespect and contempt. “ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup; for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh *damnation* (*judgment* it should be) to himself. ” Let a man examine whether he understands the nature and design

design of the ceremony which he is going to perform; let him fix the meaning of it strongly in his mind, by frequent consideration; let him remember what infinite obligations he owes to Christ, for having done and suffered so much for him; and after this, or in this frame of mind, let him come to the Lord's table: for if he eateth and drinketh unworthily, like the Corinthians, who made no difference between the Lord's Supper and a common meal (for this is clearly what St. Paul means, as the whole passage shews, and particularly the words at the end of this very verse, "not discerning the Lord's body," that is, not making a distinction in favour of the bread and wine eaten and drank on this occasion), he, by so doing, becomes exposed to be judged, and, if he does not repent, punished by God. Damnation here is unquestionably a wrong translation; it should be condemnation, or judgment; and it certainly does not relate to the next world, as is evident from the following verse; "For this cause, many among you are sick and weakly, and many sleep;" many among you have been visited with diseases, in order to call you to a sense of your guilt; and others, who, in spite of all warning, have remained impenitent, have died. These expressions

pressions then clearly only relate to punishments in this life. The next verse but one (the 32d) furnishes us with still further proof of the propriety of this interpretation ; in it St. Paul asserts, that those who were “judged,” were “chastened” by the Lord (in order clearly to their amendment), that they might not be finally condemned with the impenitent world. Now the word *judged* might just as well have been translated *damned* here, as *damnation* is put instead of *judgment* in the 29th verse : substitute *damned* then for *judged*, and you will see that it makes the verse directly contradict itself ; it must therefore be wrong ; whence you may safely draw the conclusion, that it ought to be *judgment* instead of *damnation* above. In a manner similar to this have almost all the learned men, who have written on this subject, explained these passages. You see then that the threats against those who receive unworthily, are not so great as you may have imagined ; not but what they are guilty of sin, but their sin is by no means unpardonable ; if they repent, and endeavour to do better in future, that, as well as any other, will be forgiven them. The sin against the Holy Ghost, which has no likeness to this, is the only one pronounced by the Scriptures to be unpardonable.



able. You see likewise, that the particular sin of which the Corinthians were guilty is, making no difference between the Sacrament and a common meal, not permitting their poor brethren to share with them, and drinking even to drunkenness. Now as we partake of the Lord's Supper in a totally different manner, St. Paul's threats, even if they were as great as some suppose them, do not appear to concern us. Upon the whole, if your fears and scruples arise from this passage only, you may clearly dismiss them, or at least you may so far moderate them, as not to suffer them to prevent you from partaking of the most solemn act of your religion.

But possibly you have other scruples, which the great solemnity of the ceremony strikes into you.—When I have occasionally been pressing a person to come to the Lord's table, I have had it said to me, “ Oh, Sir, a person “ ought to be very good to come to a ceremony of that kind: ”—to be sure he ought; that is, he ought to be as good as he can; and so he ought before he comes to church, or offers any prayers or praises to God of any kind; but staying away from the Sacrament, and abstaining from all kind of devotion, will not make him better; on the contrary, it will plunge him into a most desperate and

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irrecoverable state. If we try to be good, God will accept of our imperfect endeavours, though they may fall far short of success. It is in vain for us to wait till we are perfect : if none but those wholly or even nearly faultless approached God's table, how small would be the number of guests ! Who can wash his hands in innocency, that so he may approach God's altar ? There is not a man alive, who sins not ! Permit me to ask you, you who satisfy yourself, under your absence from the Sacrament, with the excuse that you are not good enough to partake of it, supposing that you were to die in that state, do you think that, if you are not good enough to meet at your Redeemer's table here on earth, you shall be thought good enough to enjoy his society in heaven, together with saints and angels ? Consider well of this ! I should suppose, that an higher degree of holiness is necessary, to secure to us an admittance into the mansions of the blessed, than what might entitle us, very safely, to celebrate our Lord's Supper here on earth. Should you plead, that you hope to become better, and that then you will joyfully meet your brethren at the Lord's table, that is too stale a pretence to be deserving of a serious answer. Among all the causes of perdition to the souls of men, there  
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is none so fruitful as procrastination. Surely you are not so absurd as to think, that you avoid the danger to which your sins expose you, by abstaining from the Sacrament ; surely you do not imagine, because you have heard that repentance is necessary before you come to the Lord's table, that it is not necessary, if you never come at all :—it is always so ; and by staying away from thence, instead of escaping any dangers, you will only add to them that of disobedience to an express command of Christ.

I should not omit to mention what is asserted of some persons, that they carry their terrors concerning this Sacrament so far, as to suppose every sin which they commit, after receiving it, to be unpardonable. This notion is not only not supported by the Scriptures, but it is, I had almost said, directly contradicted by them. All the Apostles were present at the first appointment of this Sacrament ; they partook of it from the hands of Christ himself ; yet immediately afterwards they were all guilty of the sin of forsaking, and St. Peter, in particular, of repeatedly denying him. Does any one entertain a doubt of *their* being forgiven ?—The argument is decisive ; let us not then disquiet ourselves thus causelessly, thus in vain.



## S E C T. V.

*Of the Benefits to be expected from receiving the Sacrament.*

**I**N discussing this part of my subject, I shall touch only on the \* natural benefits which result from receiving the Sacrament, and such as reason will tell us we may certainly expect: for though I do not absolutely contradict those, who insist on the Sacrament conveying to us supernatural benefits, yet, as I am not convinced that we have any authority from Scripture, to assure us of them, I do not chuse to press them. The natural benefits are of themselves abundantly sufficient to prevail on a rational person to be a frequent communicant. The first benefit which I shall

\* By natural benefits, I mean such as we can account for, from the nature of the ceremony which we perform: by supernatural benefits, I mean such as are said to be conveyed to us mysteriously and miraculously; some affirming, that, by eating and drinking the consecrated bread and wine, an instant change is made both in our state and disposition; that, from being objects of God's displeasure, we become in a moment objects of his favour; and receive supplies of his grace in a more abundant degree, and in an entirely different manner, than what we deserve or acquire by the worthy performance of any other religious action.

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mention, is this; by partaking of the Sacrament, we obey a plain command of Christ's, which, by *not* partaking of the Sacrament, we should violate; we reap, therefore, the advantage of being considered, in this instance, as obedient subjects, and escape the crime and danger of disobedience. From this obedience we might have been sure that some benefit to ourselves would arise, even though we were unable to give any account of the nature of that benefit, and for this reason;—all the commands of God are laid on us, not for the good of him who laid them, but of us on whom they are laid; nothing which we can do, can possibly be of any use to him, consequently whatever he exacts of us is for our own sakes. But we are not left in the dark concerning many of the benefits which arise from obeying the divine command, with respect to the Sacrament; they are sufficiently palpable and obvious. In the Lord's Supper we eat bread and drink wine, in remembrance of Christ's death for our sake; we cannot therefore (at least it is very incredible that we should) do this, without having strongly present to our minds, what great things he did and suffered for us: at the same time, then, that we shew our gratitude, we are taking the most likely means to increase it.

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To meditate upon his goodness to us, and particularly when we are performing so awful a ceremony, so fit to place it before us in the most glowing colours, cannot fail deeply to impress us with the sense of it; and the more frequently we perform this ceremony, in all probability the more deeply. Now this gratitude is of itself very acceptable to God; but if it be sincere, it will not stop here; its effects will extend far beyond the time that we are at the Lord's table, and it will manifest itself, not by our lips only, but in our lives also. We cannot but know, that it is to no purpose to be grateful to a benefactor, if we live in the constant neglect of his wishes and commands; we cannot but know, that it is to no purpose to cry out to our Redeemer, Lord, Lord, if we do not the things which he said. The sum of his commands was, piety to God, benevolence to men, temperance, sobriety, and chastity in our own conduct; the more grateful we are to him, the more we shall feel the necessity of paying respect to these commands; the Sacrament therefore, which creates or increases our gratitude, has an evident tendency to make us better men, and consequently to assist us in our attainment of the kingdom of heaven.

Another



Another benefit which we derive from the Sacrament is, that it fixes in our minds a deep sense of the detestable and ruinous nature of sin. This it is certainly well calculated to do, since in it we commemorate the cruel death to which Jesus Christ submitted, to wash away and atone for the sins of men; the death of the only begotten Son of God, which seems to have been absolutely requisite, in order to reconcile God to us, even though repentant and amending.

It is almost too obvious to mention, that God is much more likely to confer blessings on those who conscientiously obey the commands of Christ, in this particular, than on those who neglect them; and more especially that greatest of all blessings, the inward assistance of his Holy Spirit, to preserve them from vice, and to lead them to virtue: but I do not think these blessings confined to a worthy receiving of the Sacrament, but vouchsafed likewise, though not perhaps in an equal degree, as a reward to the diligent discharge of all other parts of Christian duty.

Some have said, that by receiving the Sacrament worthily, we secure to ourselves pardon of all our past sins; but let us remember what they mean by the word *worthily*. They mean, that before we come to the Sacrament,

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we shall have sincerely repented of every thing in which we had offended God, and shall have seriously resolved to live religiously and virtuously in future. Now, if we have done this, and if we keep stedfastly our resolutions, I agree with them, that we shall certainly obtain forgiveness; but whether there be any peculiar virtue in the Sacrament, which procures this forgiveness, whether the Sacrament be the only, or the chief means of procuring it, I am not prepared to say. I should rather suppose that we ought to esteem it as no more than *one* out of many requisites to this desirable end. I am very sure, that receiving the Sacrament ever so often will not obtain forgiveness for us, if we neither repent before we receive it, nor amend our lives afterwards; on the other hand, I will readily grant that a sincere penitent does not do all he can, I will readily grant that he omits one great essential of his religion, if he neglect to obey Christ's command in this particular, whenever he can find or make an opportunity. But yet I do not think the Sacrament so far indispensably requisite to his pardon, that if he shall have sincerely repented of his sins, and shall have given proof of the sincerity of his repentance, by the reformation of his life, but shall be hurried to the grave before he has had it in  
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his power to approach the Lord's table, I do not think the Sacrament so far indispensably requisite to his pardon, that on account of this involuntary omission, he should be deprived of everlasting happiness. On the whole, I esteem it an unnecessary question to ask, and a question which it is impossible to determine, whether or not it be the Sacrament which procures for us the forgiveness of our sins; since they who most strenuously assert it, must confess that the Sacrament will not do alone, but that repentance of sin, and amendment of life must be joined to it; while they, on the other hand, who place their hopes of pardon chiefly on this repentance and amendment, will yet allow, that it is absolutely necessary to add to these, when practicable, the grateful commemoration of our Redeemer's death, according to the ceremony which he has prescribed.

To sum up the whole of what has been said above in a few words, all the advantages, which I can take upon me to affirm with any degree of certainty, that you will receive from the Sacrament, are these; you will be considered by God, in this particular instance, as obedient subjects, and you will in a manner bind yourselves, and will therefore have an additional motive to be faithful; you will



shew forth your gratitude to the greatest of all possible benefactors, to him who laid down his life for your sake; and, by thus doing, you will engage him to favour you with still further instances of his affection for you; you will besides increase this gratitude, by thus openly and expressively exhibiting it, and you will be the more strongly incited to produce the proper fruits of it, piety, benevolence, temperance, sobriety, and chastity. One thing more; you will see, in a strong light, the ugliness and danger of sin, when you perform a ceremony representing the cruel sufferings and death of the only begotten Son of God, which appear to have been necessary to reconcile him to those who had been guilty of it. Surely all this may well be called, "the strengthening and refreshing of your souls." If there are persons who insist, that, by eating the consecrated bread and wine, some mysterious, supernatural, and inexplicable favours and graces are conveyed to us, I will not absolutely contradict them; I desire to be looked on, not as denying this doctrine, but as not thinking that I have sufficient grounds to inculcate it. "I do not see that it is clearly revealed, and I am therefore of opinion, that, however true it may be, the belief of it cannot be important to salvation."

## S E C T. VI.

*On the Preparation necessary for partaking of the Lord's Supper.*

**I** MUST observe, in the first place, that every one who has that knowledge of the Sacrament, of its nature, and its end, which every Christian ought to have (and which all, if they attend to the Scriptures, and to what they hear from the pulpit might have), and who can charge himself with no gross offences, either against God or man, every one of this description may partake of the Lord's Supper, at any time, without any particular preparation. What I mean is this, that if such a person happens, by chance, to be at any place where the Sacrament is administered, though he did not know of it beforehand, he may safely partake of it. But when any one, who is even the best informed, and who lives the most virtuously, has previous notice of a Sacrament (which is generally the case), he will do well, at least for the week before, to meditate seriously on the first appointment, the nature, and the design of it, and to offer daily his most hearty prayers to God, that he may receive it thankfully and devoutly. Our preparation then

consists of two parts, one pertaining to the understanding, the other to the heart. As to the first, the understanding, we are to endeavour to impress upon it, by frequent reading and meditation, all the circumstances relating to the life, sufferings, and death of Christ, and the benefits which arise to mankind from them ; we are to cause it to dwell more particularly upon his first institution of this ceremony ; upon its nature, which is a solemn commemoration of Christ's body broken, and his blood shed upon the cross for our sake ; and upon its design, which is to keep up a perpetual remembrance of what he has done for us, until his coming again at the last day to judge the world. A right understanding in these particulars, is the first and chief ingredient in our preparation, because it is that, out of which the other, a right disposition of heart, must be formed. This latter, I think, consists in fervent gratitude for the obligations which we owe to him whose death we celebrate, and in firm faith in the benefits which that death has procured for us, in deep sorrow for all the offences which we may have committed against him, with resolute purposes to be more obedient to his commands in future ; and lastly, in sincere affection to all our fellow creatures.

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That a heart thus disposed is requisite, *particularly* to the worthy partaking of the Sacrament, I confess, I know not of any express authority in the Scriptures, but the nature of the thing and common sense proclaim it. As to the two first mentioned dispositions, gratitude and faith, there can be no question; for if we are not thankful for Christ's death, and if we do not believe that it has been of service to us, what do we mean by the ceremony? If we have not these, it is evident that we can mean nothing. In like manner, it appears to be very unnatural, and almost impossible, when we are performing an action expressive of our thankfulness for the greatest benefit which ever was or can be conferred, that we should not feel sorrow, if we have, at any time, acted contrary to our benefactor's injunctions, and have, by so doing, injured, wounded, and displeased him, and that we should not form resolutions of being more circumspect in future. If we do not feel any sentiments of this kind, the sincerity of our gratitude and faith may well be questioned. With respect to the last-mentioned constituent part of a right disposition of heart, which I have asserted to be a sincere affection for our fellow-creatures, recollect what the Lord's Supper commemorates ;—the greatest possible

possible instance of love, a sacrifice of life, for the sake of the parties beloved ! Is it possible that we can join properly in this commemoration, without feeling ourselves inflamed by the example ; without calling to mind, how often Christ himself recommended it to our imitation ; without recollecting and obeying his repeated injunctions, that, as he has loved us, so should we love one another ; without setting before us the scene, which he has described in so lively a manner, as taking place at the day of judgment, when our final allotment will be determined by our fertility or barrenness in these fruits, which this affection for our fellow creatures produces ? But here a question will, perhaps, be put by some ; what is a person to do, who neither possesses any of these requisites to a worthy reception of the Sacrament, nor can prevail on himself to endeavour to attain them ? A very needless, and, in my opinion, impertinent question ! For, in the first place, I hope that there are few, very few, who, in its utmost extent, are concerned in the solution of it ; and as to those who are, that is, men who neither have, nor intend to acquire, gratitude, faith, repentance, or charity, what, I beg, have they to do either with the Sacrament, or with any other part of religion ?

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Whether they meet at the Lord's table, or whether they abstain from it, seems to be a matter of no moment. But vary the question a little, and say, "what is a person to do  
 " who feels that he is deficient in these  
 " Christian dispositions at present, but who  
 " humbly hopes that the time will come,  
 " when he shall more fully attain them?"

And I have a very different reply to make;—let him do what he can; let him have an humble sense of his unworthiness, but let it not keep him from celebrating the death of his Redeemer. The ceremony itself is one among many other means, perhaps it is of all others the most efficacious, to render him more worthy in future, by exciting in him serious reflection, and turning him to piety and virtue. It is scarcely possible, that his thoughts should not be of a graver cast, at least for a short time, both before and after his partaking of so solemn a rite; it is scarcely possible, that his wicked or heedless course of life should not suffer a small intermission; and though, after a while, he should relapse into his old customs, yet even these fleeting fits of consideration or virtue, which, like the morning cloud and the early dew, so soon pass away, are preferable to an uninterrupted course of vice or thoughtlessness. It may  
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please God, and if persisted in, it is most probable that it will, that insensibly they will win upon him; by degrees will grow into habit, and conduce to the saving of his soul and body. Let not any one be terrified by those expressions, which he meets with in the exhortation in our Communion service: they are grounded on those passages in St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians, which I have already explained, and have no other foundation than what they derive from them. That these passages are not so alarming as some have imagined, has been already proved. Neither let any one be disturbed, nor prevented from approaching the Lord's table, if he should not have sufficient leisure, or sufficient resolution, to go through all the preparation of prayers and meditations, which is recommended in many of the books written on this subject. Some of these, however well meant, have, I fear, been productive of unhappy effects, filling the minds of many, who attend on this ceremony, with disquiet and alarm, and driving not a few altogether away from it. With respect to prayers, I am of opinion that conciseness (to speak in general) contributes greatly to attention and fervour, while the length, to which they are drawn out by some writers, is apt to bring on languor  
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and coldness. Now it cannot be doubted but that it is the heart, with which we pray, not the number of words, that we use, of which God will take an account. To some of the meditations also, which I have seen, I have objections, both as being too flighty for rational, manly devotion, and as bearing too openly, on the very face of them, the design of moving the passions, than which nothing so soon defeats its own end. \* “ There is  
 “ something delicate in the nature of the af-  
 “ fections and passions, which are found ready  
 “ enough to rise, and exert themselves in all  
 “ their strength upon the appearance of their  
 “ proper objects ; they wait for no other sig-  
 “ nal, but are each in order in their stations,  
 “ and prepared to execute the parts allotted  
 “ them in the œconomy of nature. But if  
 “ there is any apprehension of design or art,  
 “ any suspicion, as it were, spread among  
 “ them of an intention to draw them out for  
 “ other purposes than their own, they become  
 “ reserved and backward, cold and lifeless in  
 “ their operations ; and, in short, discover in  
 “ every respect the symptoms of an unwill-  
 “ ing obedience.” The best book to read on  
 the life, sufferings, and death of Christ is the

\* Ogden.

New Testament ; every thing there is simple and natural ; the naked facts are related without either ornament or amplification ; indeed they disdain the one, and are not susceptible of the other ; all language beyond mere description sinks under them ; if attentively considered, they will of themselves supply every Christian with abundant food for meditation, which, arising spontaneously in his own mind, will be more likely to be attended with its proper fruits, faith, piety, gratitude, benevolence, than if it were excited by the reasonings and suggestions of others. Not that I would decline all aids, but I would wish those who, either from their education or course of life, have no reason to depend on their own judgments, to seek the advice of those, whom they think better skilled than themselves, in the choice of books proper for them to read.

I will conclude this chapter with a remark, which possibly may be deemed a repetition ; but I would wish to leave it impressed on the minds of my readers. It is this ; they who never partake of the Sacrament at all, have only God's mercy to trust to for the salvation of their souls ; why then should not they, who *do* partake of it (though not perhaps in so worthy a manner as they ought), trust to  
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the same mercy? Surely God is more likely to extend his compassion to those who have been conscientiously desirous of doing their duty, in this one great particular, than to those who live in constant disobedience to a most express command of Christ.

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## A P P E N D I X.

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**I** HAVE observed in the fourth section, that the word *damnation*, in the 29th verse of the 11th chapter of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, is a wrong translation; and in this, I believe, that I am supported by all scriptural critics and commentators, without exception. This being the case, is it not surprising that the word should be suffered so long to keep its place, to the deceiving and misleading of generation after generation? Having gotten this opportunity, I shall take leave to speak my sentiments somewhat at large, on a subject very near my heart. If the error above-mentioned were the only one in our translation, we should not yet, when we consider how very material an error it is, be without cause of complaint that it is suffered to remain so long uncorrected: but sorry I am to assert, that the translation abounds, I will not say with errors, but



but with passages which call for amendment, in almost every part of it : sorry I am to assert, that in not a few places the sense of the original is totally misrepresented ; and that in very many, the style is ungrammatical, confused, unintelligible, and not merely inelegant (that were a small fault), but positively vulgar. It must not be expected that I bring forward, on this occasion, instances to prove the justice of these charges ; nothing could be easier, but it would take up more room than my plan in this little essay will admit ; there is indeed no necessity for it, for I will be bold to say, that no liberal scholar will be hardy enough to contradict me. Some perhaps may urge the excellence of the translation in general, which I will readily concede to them ; but can any argument be thence drawn, that if it be faulty in numberless material places, it ought not to be amended ?— Surely not !— If, however, there should be any one who doubts its imperfections, I would only desire him to look into the writings of any of our learned countrymen, who have either translated or commented on particular parts of the original, and he will find them incidentally pointing out blemishes and errors in our common translation without number. Or, if he is desirous of receiving more full conviction,

conviction, and with less trouble to himself, I would refer him to "Dr. Kennicott's Remarks on select Passages in the Old Testament," and "Professor Symonds's Critical Observations on our present Version of the Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles;" books written for the express purpose of shewing in what particulars those parts of the English Scriptures, on which they treat, are faulty. In the former of these writers, he will meet with instances of erroneous rendering in our Old Testament, so numerous and material, as will astonish him; in the latter, he will see passages quoted from almost every page of the Evangelists and the Acts of the Apostles, which offend grossly either against grammar, perspicuity, or elegance. On a mere deficiency in this latter quality, as I hinted above, no great stress should be laid, but surely it is not too fastidious to require, that our Bible be freed from positive vulgarisms! To preclude futile cavils, it may not be unnecessary to have repeated this distinction.

I anticipate, and will therefore reply to a censure, which will probably be cast on me by some, on account of the above reflections. What can he mean, when he professes to write for the people at large, by troubling them

them with disquisitions of this kind? Does he want to make them dissatisfied with their Bible?—Far be it from me! I want to make them better satisfied with it, by informing them, that much of the obscurity, and all the blemishes which they may meet with in it, are not chargeable on itself, but that they arise principally from certain disadvantages (the nature of which I shall unfold more fully in the sequel) to which those who turned it into English were subjected; and I would wish besides to prepare their minds for the reception of a corrected translation, which, sooner or later, must be put forth; for surely what has been so often, so loudly, and so justly called for, cannot much longer be called for in vain.

Unquestionably every one knows, that the English language is not that in which the Scripture was originally written; every one knows (or if any do not, I beg now to inform them) that even the latest books of it were composed long before the invention of printing, and that the only method of multiplying and diffusing copies of it was by writing them with the hand; whence the copies so written were called Manuscripts. This being the case, it is sufficiently obvious that, either from carelessness or design, many variations in  
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them would arise; words, and even sentences, would be altered, transposed, omitted, inserted; whence it evidently follows, that the more of these copies, which we have to compare together, the greater probability there is, that we shall arrive at the true original reading. The deviations from this will not be all in the same places; where one manuscript is faulty, a second or a third will be correct; and thus, with the assistance of skill and study, they will serve for the amending of each other. Now almost two centuries have elapsed, since the translation which we have in use at present was made, and within that space of time many original manuscripts of the Scriptures have been discovered. By these it appears, that the Hebrew original, from which our present English Scriptures were translated, is corrupted in very many places, so that, if no other impediment had existed to a perfect translation, and one adapted to the present generation, being made, this alone would have been insuperable. But an Hebrew text, more exempt from errors, is by no means the only advantage which those who should undertake a translation of the Scriptures now would enjoy above those at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Several ancient versions (that is, translations into other languages), made in

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very early times, have been discovered or brought to Europe since that period, by which great light is thrown on many mutilated passages in the original. Add to this also, that the Hebrew and Greek languages have been more cultivated and are better understood; and that numberless eminent scholars, in all the polished nations of Christendom, have exercised their talents, and spent their whole lives in criticising, explaining, translating different parts of the sacred writings, of whose labours those who shall be employed to correct our present translation will doubtless avail themselves. There are besides still other reasons, which, even exclusively of those already named, would make a revival of our English Scriptures highly necessary. The alterations, which take place in any living language, in the course of two centuries, are usually very considerable. This has been eminently the case with ours, during those just elapsed. Many words in common use, when our translation was made, are now quite obsolete; others have totally changed their signification. Many phrases, then perhaps not deemed inelegant, are now used by none but those of the lowest order, or only in particular parts of the kingdom, and by consequence are to some ludicrous or disgusting, to others unintelligible. All the above  
assertions

assertions taken together, if true (and I am sure they cannot be disproved), form such an accumulation of argument in favour of a revival of our translation, that the objections must be strong indeed which can counterbalance them. I will conclude, with briefly stating and replying to such as have come to my knowledge.

I. It is contended by some, that the general excellence of the translation being universally allowed, it is very unreasonable to wish to alter it, on account of some few unimportant defects. It is not meant to be denied, that the translation, generally speaking, is excellent; that the simplicity and sublimity of the original are, for the most part, admirably kept up; that the authors of it (considering the comparative disadvantages under which they laboured) have surpassed what could have been expected from them; but it is insisted (on the authority of the most eminent scriptural critics), that the defects in it are, notwithstanding, neither few nor unimportant; and therefore that its general excellence, however great, ought to be no protection of its partial blemishes. Surely a compromise may be agreed upon, between its general admirers and particular censurers; let us not have a *new*, but a *corrected* translation; let us



carefully retain the beauties of the present, but let us liberally reject its imperfections.

II. A second set of objectors content themselves with alledging, that the translation *was* a good one at the time when it was made; that it has answered all purposes to our forefathers, and therefore that it may very well do for their descendants. This is so strange an argument, that I do not think myself authorized in stating it, without bringing proof that it has been used. In an anonymous pamphlet, published the year before last, called, "an Apology for the Liturgy and Clergy of the Church of England," written in the main very sensibly and judiciously (except where the \* author is warped by an excessive zeal for retaining whatever relates to the church precisely in its present state), an at-

\* The same anonymous writer, after paying a cold compliment to the veracity and diligence of Dr. Kennicott, thinks proper to add, "but let me have leave to say, it has not yet been seen, that religion or learning have been *much* the gainers by his collations." And what has prevented it from being seen long ago? What but the aversion with which such writers as this receive, and the vehemence with which they oppose every proposal for an improvement of our translation! Whenever that important and highly necessary work shall be undertaken, the utility of Dr. Kennicott's labours will shine forth in its full lustre.

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tack is made on Professor Symonds, for his Critical Observations, mentioned above; one part of which is as follows: " Many of the  
 " corrections with which his (Dr. Symonds's)  
 " work abounds, may be fairly attributed to  
 " his ignorance of the idioms of his native  
 " tongue, which were in common use in the  
 " age when the present version was made.  
 " With equal propriety he might find fault  
 " with Chaucer or Spencer, or any other of  
 " our old authors, because they do not con-  
 " form themselves to the mode of writing  
 " peculiar to modern times." What perverse reasoning is this! If I understand Dr. Symonds rightly, it is not his prime object to censure the passages which he corrects, as having been obscure, ungrammatical, or vulgar, at the time when they were written, but from the alterations, refinements, improvements, which custom and the labour of several ages have introduced into our language, as being deformed by some of these blemishes *now*. Are Chaucer and Spencer intelligible to the common people of this day? It is not necessary that they should; but will any one maintain the same with respect to the Bible? It will not be supposed that I mean to put the Bible on a footing with these authors, in point  
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of obscurity, though, in replying to the arguments of a particular person, I am compelled to appear to do it.

The translators of 1611, do not seem either to have expected or desired that their version should serve for all posterity. It is, I think, evident from their preface, that, though building on the foundation of their predecessors, they flattered themselves that they had excelled them, they yet never conceived that they had attained perfection. They thought it no imputation on those who went before them, that coming into their labours, they endeavoured to improve upon them; it was their opinion that they should have received the thanks of these earlier translators, if they had been alive for such endeavours: is it not then reasonable to conclude, if the great work which they executed is susceptible of further improvement (which themselves could not now but confess), that so far from conceiving the endeavour to make better what they had left good a reflection on them, they would esteem those who exerted it deserving of their warmest gratitude? Supposing then their translation to be much more perfect than it is; supposing it impossible that, at the time when it was written, it could have been excelled (which, however,



however, is not the case \*); still, when we consider, that there are reasons why it is worse to us than it was to the generation for which it was made, and other reasons why it is capable of being better, most certainly its former excellence ought to be no bar against its present amendment.

III. It is objected, thirdly, to a correction of our Bible, that however much wanted it may be in appearance, the hazarding it is not expedient; that the people are so accustomed to it in its present state, that any change in it would unsettle and unhinge their faith; and that though it should be allowed, that great improvements might be made, yet it is better to keep it as it is, than to incur the danger of this evil consequence. This panic implies, in my opinion, an unjustifiable distrust of the providence of the Almighty, whose blessing may unquestionably be expected, without enthusiasm, on any attempt to give mankind a more genuine representation of his holy word. Neither is the notion that altering our Scriptures will be in any degree detrimental to re-

\* For instance, some passages are rendered better by earlier translators, and there is frequently a want of uniformity in turning the same word in the original, when evidently used in the same sense, and likewise in giving us the proper names.

ligion, supported by experience. Within the seventy years immediately preceding the time when the translation now in use was put forth, several different translations had been made, and in their turns adopted; nor do we read of any ill consequences proceeding from it. The causes why an alteration is necessary, might be explained in a popular way to the people, by their ministers; and it might be left to the option of each congregation to adopt the corrected version, or to retain that in use at present, until they should be convinced of its comparative inferiority. Some doubtless would at first hold out, but there is little reason to think that their obstinacy would be of any long continuance.

IV. The last objection which I have heard to a correction of our translation, is from those who allow the necessity and expediency of it; but whenever they are pressed with, "why should it not immediately be entered upon?" disappoint us with the previous question, "is this a proper time?" which they fail not to determine in the negative. Why? Because of the numbers and activity of the Dissenters, as well in as out of the church, who would be pressing forward with, and zealously obtruding, their particular sentiments, by which it might happen, either that our Scriptures

tures would speak Calvinistical, Arian, Socinian, or some other heretical language ; or the clamours which would be raised by the sectaries, would operate to the subversion of our ecclesiastical establishment. I see no grounds for these fears : the work would of course be committed to the superintendence of the heads of the church, and probably no small part of it would be executed by them. Is it likely that they should permit the Scriptures to speak differently in English from what they imagine them to do in the original ? If these reverend persons should be biaſſed any way, will they not naturally rather be biaſſed in favour of the religion of the church of England, than againſt it ? As to the clamours which may be raised, the church muſt bear up againſt them as well as ſhe can ; with the conſciouſneſs of having done right, and with ſo great a majority of the people on her ſide as ſhe has, I cannot think that they will do her any eſſential injury. But admitting that there were more juſt grounds for theſe fears, and allowing them their full force, is the time ever likely to arrive when they will be leſs alarming ? Is it probable that the number of the Diſſenters will decrease, or their zeal become leſs active ? On the contrary, is not our ſtiffneſs in reſiſting this improvement,

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provement,



provement, for which I am pleading, and some others in our church, which might be named, more likely to augment than to lessen both the quantity and the quality of dissent? Unquestionably it is; and therefore the constant cry of, "it is not the time," whenever a correction of our Scriptures is proposed, is precisely equivalent to deciding that it never shall be undertaken at all. And thus, on account of a danger problematical at least, if not altogether imaginary, notwithstanding the numerous circumstances, which concur, enabling us to improve it, our Bible is to be handed down to the remotest posterity, with all its imperfections on its head! I deny not (God forbid that I should) that, even in its present state, it is sufficient to make us wise unto salvation; but I assert, that it abounds with blemishes, the removal of which would have a direct tendency, with the blessing of God, both to enlighten our faith, and to reform our practice.

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It is with much concern that I perceive the object aimed at in this Appendix apparently removed to a far greater distance than when I took up my pen to write it. The cause of reformation has received a deadly wound from those

those who pretend to be its warmest friends. Their violence, their acrimony, their not discountenancing (to speak in the mildest terms) the ruinous machinations of desperate and unprincipled men, who contend under their banners, their carelessness as to all consequences, when put in competition with the advancement of their favourite plans, have made to the body of the people the very name of reformation suspicious and hateful. If church and state descend to posterity, unamended by the present generation, these, in my opinion, are the men to whom it is chiefly to be imputed.

T H E E N D.





